

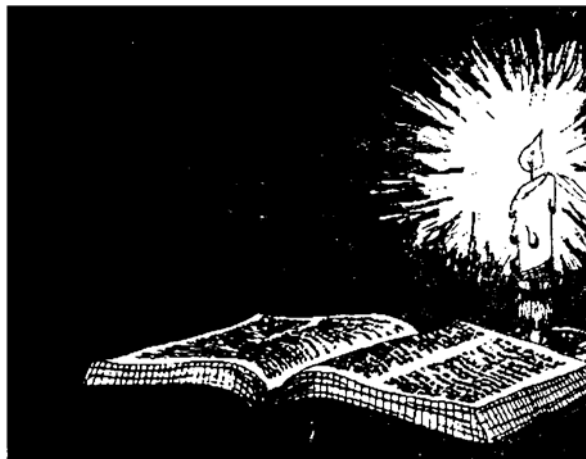
Lesson
6

Your New Standards

In order to live together, people must follow certain rules or *standards*. Think about a family with several children. What would happen if the older ones were allowed to make noise all night? No one would get any rest. Standards are needed. Now that you are a Christian, you belong to a new family. You need new standards.

Standards are also needed if a person wants to reach a special goal. Athletes, for example, follow the instructions of their coach. They do some things, but there are other things they don't do. Their purpose is to develop skill and strength so they can win the prize. Now that you are a Christian, you have a new, special goal. That goal is to become all that your heavenly Father wants you to be. This is another reason why you need standards.

Your heavenly Father plans for you to be part of His family and reach the goals He has for your life. This lesson explains the new standards He has given to help you. Following them will bring you many benefits.



In this lesson you will study . . .

Who Sets the Standards?
Where Can You Find the Standards?
How Can You Meet the Standards?
Standards for Success

This lesson will help you to . . .

- Describe the standards God has for you.
- Explain how you can meet God's standards.
- State the results that will come by meeting God's standards.

WHO SETS THE STANDARDS?

Objective 1. *Identify the person who gives you the standards you need for your new life.*

In a home the parents set the standards. They let the children know how they should behave. The parents tell the children what they can do and what they can't do.

The children soon learn that they must live by these standards. When they break the rules, their parents correct them. If they stubbornly refuse to obey, the parents may have to discipline them. They are still members of the family, but their disobedience brings them problems and suffering.

Our heavenly Father sets the standards for what His children should do and what they shouldn't do. Sometimes He, too, has to discipline His children to teach them to be good and obedient.



For You To Do

- 1 The standards in a well-ordered home are set by the
 - a) children.
 - b) neighbors.
 - c) parents.
- 2 The right to say how we should behave as Christians belongs to
 - a) our heavenly Father.
 - b) the culture in which we live.
 - c) us.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND THE STANDARDS?

Objective 2. *Describe some of the standards for your new life.*

We discover a person's standard by watching how he or she acts. How do we find out the standards of a Christian? The answer is simple yet profound. We discover the standards of a Christian by watching how Jesus Christ lived. The Bible gives us the record of His life. He is our perfect example and pattern for living.

We also discover Christian standards by studying what Jesus said about them. In the great "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 5, 6, and 7), Jesus described the standards of a Christian. These were His own standards. By His power working in us, they can become ours.

Jesus began His sermon by telling about the special blessings God gives to those who follow His standards. He continued with many other important teachings. Here are some of the things He said:

The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 5, 6, 7

Happy are those who know
they are spiritually poor;
the Kingdom of heaven
belongs to them!
Happy are those who mourn;
God will comfort them!

Happy are those who are
humble;
they will receive what God
has promised!
Happy are those whose
greatest desire is to do
what God requires;
God will satisfy them fully!
Happy are those who
are merciful to others;
God will be merciful to them!
Happy are the pure in heart;
they will see God!
Happy are those who work
for peace;
God will call them His
children!
Happy are those who are
persecuted because they
do what God requires;
the Kingdom of heaven
belongs to them!

You are like light for the whole world. . . . your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.

You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.” But now I tell you: do not take revenge on someone who wrongs you.

You have heard that it was said, “Love your friends, hate your enemies.” But now I tell you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may become the sons of your Father in heaven.

Do not store up riches for yourselves here on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and robbers break in and steal. Instead, store up riches for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and robbers cannot break in and steal. For your heart will always be where your riches are.

So do not start worrying: “Where will my food come from? or my drink? or my clothes?” . . . Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these things. Instead, be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with all these other things.



For You To Do

- 3** The perfect pattern for your new life is found in
- a) your pastor.
 - b) the saints of the church.
 - c) Jesus Christ.
 - d) other Christians.

4 Following are several opinions. Circle the letter in front of each one that matches the techniques Jesus gave in the verses you have read from the “Sermon on the Mount.”

- a “If another Christian is in need, I should help him and not keep all of my money for myself.”
- b “If someone says lies about me, I have a right to hate that person.”
- c “If someone tries to rob me, I have a right to hit that person and injure him.”
- d “If I lose my job because I have become a Christian, I can be happy because God still cares for me.”
- e “If my parents or friends reject me because I have become a Christian, I should be angry at them and hate them.”

Jesus gave us a basic principle on how to treat others. Many people have called it the “Golden Rule.”

**“Do for others what
you want them to
do for you.”**

Matthew 7:12

Matthew 7:12. “Do for others what you want them to do for you.”

Certainly we would all agree that people should not act badly toward others. Many religious leaders have said this. But the Golden Rule goes much further! Jesus is saying that we should actively do good to others. We should be the first to treat them the way we ourselves would like to be treated.

We should not be proud, selfish, quarrelsome, or critical. We should not give place even in our thoughts to illicit love affairs or evil passions.

Our first interest should be to please God and do what He wants us to do. We can’t make earthly riches our goal and serve God at the same time; but if we put Him first, He will see to it that all our needs are met. Besides, whatever we do for Him will be rewarded in heaven with riches that will last forever.



For You To Do

- 5 Those who obey the Golden Rule most closely are those who
- a) wait for others to do good to them, then do something good for them in return.
 - b) look for ways to do good to others, and do for them what they themselves would like.
- 6 Are there some ways of acting that do not match the teachings of Jesus? Underline each phrase that states a change you would like to make.
- a Forgive people who have mistreated you.
 - b Give generously to those in need.
 - c Pray for those who reject you because you have become a Christian.
 - d Think of good things to do for others and do them.
 - e Work for peace in your family and community.

HOW CAN YOU MEET THE STANDARDS?

Objective 3. *State how you can meet the standards God has given for your new life.*

Jesus knew that nobody would be able to follow these rules unless he or she had God's help. So He taught His disciples to pray to their heavenly Father and ask Him to help them. In Lesson 5, you studied the model prayer He gave them, which we call "The Lord's Prayer." What kind of help does God give you?

Many times we see children who look or act just like their parents. They do because they share the same life. In the same way, we can be like our heavenly Father because we share His life. How? Here is a wonderful fact. Your Father has sent His Holy Spirit to live in you. This is how He has shared His own life with you! You will study more about this in the next lesson. Don't worry about trying to live up to what God expects of you. He will help you.



For You To Do

- 7 Review "The Lord's Prayer" in Lesson 5. In this model prayer, Jesus taught us to pray to
- the saints.
 - God, our heavenly Father.
 - our ancestors.

STANDARDS FOR SUCCESS

Objective 4. *Choose a description of successful living.*

Jesus lets us know that His instructions are the pattern for a successful life. Our life is like a building. Our thoughts, words, and actions are all bricks in this building. As we line them all up on the foundation of His teaching, we will have a character that can stand the tests or storms of life.

Whoever lives as he or she pleases, without following the standards Jesus has given, will be a failure like a house built on the sand without a foundation. That person won't be able to stand when the storms come.

If you want to be a successful Christian, build your life on Christ's teaching and follow His standards. The Holy Spirit will help you do it.



For You To Do

- 8 Jesus teaches us that true success will come if we
- build our lives on His teachings.
 - know what He said about happiness.
 - repeat many prayers every day.
 - memorize everything He said.



Check Your Answers

4 Opinions **a** and **d** match Jesus' sermon.

1 c) parents.

5 b) look for ways to do good to others, and do for them what they themselves would like.

2 a) our heavenly Father.

7 b) God, our heavenly Father.

3 c) Jesus Christ.

8 a) build our lives on His teachings.